If it was due to insufficient accommodation, there was ample time for them to inform us of the fact. They ought to have told us at least yesterday that the tickets that they had issued were cancelled and that the possessors of those tickets could not claim admission on the strength of those tickets. What sort of conduct this is and how it is to be reconciled with reason, I fail to see. I also can assure you that there is a good deal of resentment created in the minds of the public here on account of this.

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon*): Does the member know that the Personal Assistant to the Commissioner of Police and a lot of Police Inspectors were surrounding this Hall when the Police Demand was being discussed?

MR A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): I know.

PRESIDENT: That has nothing to do with the question of admission.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): They were occupying seats here. If they could be allowed admission why not the members of the public?

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon*): Their presence would have been discountenanced as those of strangers who have unduly influenced the vote of the House one way or the other if it were in the British Parliament.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI: (*Trivandrum*): It is to some extent true. There is the fact that the Police budget was being discussed, the working of the Police Department was being criticised and the Policemen have to admit the people at the gate. I do not know whether there is any connection between the discussion of the Police budget and the admission of visitors at the gate by policemen.

Whatever that be, Sir, it is a matter which calls for scrutiny, and explanation. It is a grave matter in which we, the members of this House, and the public at large, and especially we, the members who have been responsible for bringing in friends here, who would otherwise spend their hours comfortably in their homes in this hot season, are entitled to have an explanation. I bring this matter to you for examination; and I hope that this will not be repeated in future.

PRESIDENT: I am sorry to hear your statement, Mr. Thanu Pillai that people who were given tickets were not admitted. I shall enquire into the matter that you have mentioned and shall make a statement in reply to that tomorrow.

DEMAND IV—LAND REVENUE.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income-Tax Commissioner*): I rise to move for a grant not exceeding Rs. 8,71,987 under Demand IV—Land Revenue.

Motions 192 and 193.

The following motions were not moved.

MR. K. P. ABRAHAM:

192. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 14,604 for establishment by Rs. 6.

MR. K. P. KOCHUKORA TARAKAN:

193. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 14,604 for establishment by Rs. 15.

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Motion 194

MR. N. JOHN JOSEPH (*Nominated*): സർ, ലാൻഡ് റവന്യൂ കമ്മീഷണക്ക് അനുവദിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള ഫന്റ, ൦ ൦ ൦ രൂപായിൽനിന്നും ഫ ൦ ൦ രൂപാ കുറയ്ക്കണമെന്നുള്ളതാണ് എന്റെ ഉപക്ഷേപം. അധ്വകൃതക്ക് ഭൂമി പതിച്ചുകൊടുക്കുന്നതിലുള്ള അവശതകളെപ്പറ്റി ഗവണ്മെന്റിനെ ബോധിപ്പിക്കണമെന്നാണ് എന്റെ ഉദ്ദേശം. കാരുണ്യമേറിയ ഗവണ്മെന്റ് അധ്വകൃതക്ക് സഹായസഹകരണങ്ങളും സൗജന്യങ്ങളും നൽകിക്കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. അതിന് ഗവണ്മെന്റിനോട് നന്ദി പറഞ്ഞു കൊള്ളുന്നു. എന്നാൽ ഗവണ്മെന്റുദ്ദേശിക്കുന്ന പ്രകാരത്തിലുള്ള സൗജന്യങ്ങൾ അവക്ക് കിട്ടിവരുന്നില്ല എന്നുള്ള സംഗതി ഗവണ്മെന്റിനെ ബോധിപ്പിക്കണമെന്നാണ് ഞാൻ ഉദ്ദേശിക്കുന്നത്. ദയവുള്ള ഗവണ്മെന്റ് രാജ്യമൊട്ടുക്കായി ഫന്റ, ൦ ൦ ൦ ഏക്കർ സ്ഥലം സൗജന്യനിരക്കിൽ അധ്വകൃതക്ക് പതിച്ചുകൊടുക്കുന്നതിന് തിരിച്ചുവച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. അതിൽ ചില വൈകല്യങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടെന്നു എന്റെ ബഡ്ജറ്റ് പ്രസംഗത്തിൽ പറഞ്ഞിട്ടുള്ളതുകൊണ്ട് അതിനെപ്പറ്റി കൂട്ടത്തലായി ഒന്നും പറയുന്നില്ല.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara cum Kartikapalli*): I rise to a point of order. I beg to know whether this discussion comes under allowances because it has been ruled that under allowances we can only discuss matters regarding allowances.

PRESIDENT: How do you bring this discussion under the head "allowance," Mr. John Joseph?

MR. N. JOHN JOSEPH (*Nominated*): എന്റെ ഉപക്ഷേപത്തെ വോട്ടിനിടണമെന്നു ഞാൻ വിചാരിക്കുന്നില്ല.

PRESIDENT: ടാവലിംഗ് അലവൻസിനും നിങ്ങൾ പറയുന്ന സംഗതിക്കും എന്തു ബന്ധമാണുള്ളത്?

MR. N. JOHN JOSEPH (*Nominated*): ലാൻഡ് റവന്യൂ കമ്മീഷണർ നാട്ടുഒട്ടുക്കു സഞ്ചരിച്ചാൽ മാത്രമെ അധ്വകൃതരുടെ അവശതകളെ മനസ്സിലാക്കാൻ സാധിക്കുകയുള്ളു. അതുകൊണ്ടു ഈ സംഗതികൾ ഗവണ്മെന്റിനെ ബോധിപ്പിക്കണമെന്നാണ് എന്റെ ഉദ്ദേശം.

അധ്വകൃതക്ക് പതിച്ചുകൊടുക്കുന്നതിന് ഫന്റ, ൦ ൦ ൦ ഏക്കർ സ്ഥലം തിരിച്ചുവച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടെങ്കിലും അതുമുഴുവൻ ഏക്കർ സ്ഥലം അവക്ക് കിട്ടുന്നതിന് തരമില്ല എന്നുള്ള സംഗതി ഗവണ്മെന്റു ബോധിക്കേണ്ടതാണു. കേവലം സെറിൽമെന്റു രജിസ്റ്റർ നോക്കിയാണു ഈ സ്ഥലങ്ങൾ തിരിച്ചുവച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത്. ഇതിൽ ഒട്ടുവളരെ സ്ഥലം സ്വാധീന

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ബലമുള്ള സമുദായക്കാരുടെ കൈവശം ഇരിക്കുന്നതിനാൽ ആ സ്ഥലങ്ങൾ അവക്കു പതിച്ചുകൊടുത്തുപോയിരിക്കുന്ന അതുകൊണ്ടു ആ സ്ഥലങ്ങൾ അധഃകൃതക്കു കിട്ടാൻ സാധിക്കുന്നില്ല. ഡിപ്പാർട്ടുമെൻറിലെ കീഴ്സിൽബന്ധികളുടെ സഹായസഹകരണത്തോടുകൂടി ഏതാനും സ്ഥലങ്ങൾ കൈവശക്കാക്കു പതിച്ചുകൊടുക്കുന്നുണ്ടു്. അങ്ങിനെ മേലാൽ പതിച്ചുകൊടുക്കാൻ പാടില്ലെന്നു ഗവണ്മെൻറിൽനിന്നും ഉത്തരവു ഉണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ടു്. ഇങ്ങനെ സ്ഥലങ്ങൾ മിക്കവാറും പോയതിനുശേഷം ഇങ്ങിനെ ഒരു ഗവണ്മെൻറുത്തരവു പുറപ്പെടുവിച്ചതുകൊണ്ടു വലിയ പ്രയോജനം ഉണ്ടെന്നു തോന്നുന്നില്ല. കൃഷിക്കുപയോഗമില്ലാത്ത സ്ഥലങ്ങളും മലനാടുകളിൽ വെള്ളമില്ലാത്ത സ്ഥലങ്ങളുമാണു് ഇപ്പോൾതിരിച്ചിട്ടിരിക്കുന്നതു്. കൂലിവേലകൊണ്ടു ജീവിക്കുന്നവരാണു് അധഃകൃതർ. ആ സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ ധനവാന്മാർ ഇല്ലാത്തതുകൊണ്ടു കൂലിവേലപോലും ചെയ്യുന്നതിനു സാധിക്കാത്ത അധഃകൃതർ എന്തുചെയ്യുമെന്നു ഗവണ്മെൻറു ദയവായി ചിന്തിക്കണം. നാട്ടിൻറെ നാനാഭാഗങ്ങളിലും കന്നകാലിവനങ്ങൾ കാണുന്നുണ്ടു്. ഈ സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ കന്നുകാലികൾ മേയുന്നില്ല. അതുപോലെ കുപ്പുകളായി തിരിച്ചിട്ടിരിക്കുന്ന സ്ഥലങ്ങളുമുണ്ടു്. കൺട്രാക്ടർമാരുടെ സ്വാധീനബലംകൊണ്ടു് അവക്കു വേണ്ട സഹായസഹകരണങ്ങൾ കിട്ടുന്നു. ഇങ്ങിനെയുള്ള കുപ്പുസ്ഥലങ്ങളും കന്നകാലിവനങ്ങളും ആവശ്യമില്ലാത്തതിനാൽ അവയെ ആദ്യത്തെസ്ഥലങ്ങൾക്കുപകരം അധഃകൃതക്കുകൊടുക്കണം.

പതിച്ചു കൊടുക്കുന്ന ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാർ ഭൂമിപതിച്ചുകൊടുക്കുന്ന കാര്യത്തിൽ കാണിക്കുന്ന അനാശാസ്യത നിമിത്തം അധഃകൃതക്കു പ്രയോജനം ഉണ്ടാകുന്നില്ല. ഇങ്ങിനെ വരുന്നതുകൊണ്ടു് ഗവണ്മെൻറു് ആണ്ടുതോറും മനസ്ഥാപിക്കുന്നുമുണ്ടു്. ഭൂമി പതിച്ചു കൊടുക്കുന്നതിൽകാണിക്കുന്ന നയം നിമിത്തം ചിലതഹശീൽദാരന്മാരെ ഗവണ്മെൻറു താക്കീതു ചെയ്തിട്ടുള്ളതായി എനിക്കറിയാം. ഭൂമിപതിച്ചുകൊടുക്കുന്ന കാര്യത്തിൽ കീഴ്സിൽബന്ധികൾ ശ്രദ്ധപതിപ്പിച്ചുകാണുന്നില്ല. പാവപ്പെട്ടവരുടെ ഓരോ പ്രവർത്തികൾ നിമിത്തം ഏതാനും റിക്കാർഡുകൾ ഉണ്ടാകുന്നതായാൽ അതിനെ തഹശീൽദാക്കും പേഷ്കാക്കും മാറാൻ പാടില്ലാത്തവിധത്തിലാണു് വന്നുചേരുന്നതു്. റിക്കാർഡുണ്ടാക്കിയാൽ അതിൽ നിന്നു് രക്ഷകിട്ടണമെങ്കിൽ വ്യവഹാരത്തിനു പോകണം. അതിനു് അധഃകൃതക്കു് സാധിക്കുകയുമില്ല. അതിനാൽ ഇതിനു് ഒരു പരിഹാരം ഉണ്ടാക്കേണ്ടതാണു്.

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[Mr. N. John Joseph.]

അതുകൂടാതെ ഡിപ്പാർട്ടുമെൻറിലെ കീഴ്സിൽബന്ധികൾക്കു് ഒരു തെറ്റിദ്ധാരണ ഉണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ടു്. അധഃകൃതക്കു് പതിച്ചു കൊടുക്കുന്ന ഭൂമികൾ തറവിലകൂടാതെ പതിച്ചുകൊടുക്കാൻ പാടില്ലെന്നു് പ്രത്യേകമായി അവർ വ്യാഖ്യാനിക്കുന്നു. സൗജന്യമായി ഇങ്ങിനെ പതിച്ചു കൊടുത്ത സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ നിന്നും ഇതു് നിമിത്തം അവർ തിരിയെ പോകേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. ഇങ്ങനെ പത്തുപതിനഞ്ചു് സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽനിന്നും ഇവരെ ഇറക്കിവിടുകയും അവർ ഇപ്പോൾ അലഞ്ഞു നടക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. അതിനെപ്പറ്റി ഒന്നും ഇവിടെ പ്രസ്ഥാവിക്കുന്നില്ല. ഗവണ്മെൻറിൽനിന്നും ഭൂമിതിരിച്ചിട്ടിട്ടുണ്ടെങ്കിലും അവക്കു കിട്ടീട്ടുള്ള ഭൂമി വളരെ ദുരമാണെന്നും ന്യായമായ രീതിയിൽ അവക്കു് പ്രോത്സാഹനം ചെയ്യുന്നില്ലെന്നും, പതിച്ചു കൊടുക്കുന്ന ഭൂമിയുടെ വിസ്തീർണ്ണം നോക്കിയാൽ അറിയാം.

ഇതിനെ വേണ്ടവിധത്തിൽ നിയന്ത്രിക്കുന്നതിനു അധഃകൃതസംരക്ഷകനെ നിയമിക്കുകയും അദ്ദേഹത്തിനു അൻപതു് രൂപാ അലവൻസ് കൊടുക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നുണ്ടു്. അദ്ദേഹത്തിനു ധാരാളം ജോലി ഉള്ള സ്ഥിതിക്കും ഇതു് വളരെ ശ്രമപ്പെട്ട ജോലിയായതുകൊണ്ടും ഈ ജോലിയും കൂടി നിർവ്വഹിക്കുന്നതിനു അദ്ദേഹത്തിനു് സമയം ഇല്ല. എങ്കിലും അദ്ദേഹത്തിനു് കഴിവുള്ളതെല്ലാം ചെയ്യുന്നുണ്ടു്. പക്ഷേ അതു പോരാ. അതുകൊണ്ടു് മുഴുവൻ ജോലിചെയ്യത്തക്ക ഒരു അധഃകൃതസംരക്ഷകനെ നിയമിക്കണം.

PRESIDENT: അതു് ഈ വിഷയത്തോടു് സംബന്ധപ്പെട്ടതല്ല.

MR. N. JOHN JOSEPH (*Nominated*): അതുകൊണ്ടു് ഗവണ്മെൻറിനേറയും പ്രത്യേകിച്ചു് ലാൻഡ് റവന്യുകമ്മീഷണർ അവർകളുടെയും ശ്രദ്ധയിൽ പെടുത്തുന്നതു്, അധഃകൃതർക്കു ഭൂമിപതിച്ചു കൊടുക്കുന്ന വിഷയത്തിലുള്ള ന്യൂനതകളെ പരിഹരിച്ചു, അവക്കായിതിരിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള സ്ഥലങ്ങൾക്കു് പകരം കഴിവുള്ളടത്തോളം നല്ല സ്ഥലങ്ങൾ നോക്കി എടുത്തു്, അവയെ പ്രത്യേകം വേർതിരിച്ചു് പതിച്ചു കൊടുത്തും വേണ്ട സഹായസഹകരണങ്ങൾ ചെയ്യണമെന്നാണു്."

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income-Tax Commissioner*): Sir, I oppose the motion. This department has been very sympathetic in the matter of assignment of lands for depressed classes. In almost all taluks, lands are ear-marked for registry to depressed classes and lands, outside the ear-marked area are also registered to them. Up to the end of Medom 1106, an area

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of about 5974 acres has been assigned to them both from the ear-marked area and outside it. The total extent ear-marked is 15,132 acres. As for the selection of lands, Government ordered that lands should be examined by the officers of the Land Revenue Department in company with the Protector of Depressed classes and selected so that lands really unfit for cultivation may wherever possible be substituted by lands fit for cultivation. That has been done. The difficulty is that there are only very few Tarisu lands in coastal taluks or midland taluks for registry to depressed classes. The Puduval lands now available lie near the mountains. These depressed classes require lands where they can get labour. That is the difficulty and the officers of the department are trying their level best to oblige them as far as possible. That is all I have to say.

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): Sir, are we expected to support the motion or speak on it? I have tabled a similar motion which is coming lower down, to speak on the policy of the Government in the matter of assignment of lands to depressed classes.

MR. KAYALAM PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*): There is only one motion under this category. Others are different.

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): My motion comes lower down and that is to discuss the question of adopting more effective measures for the uplift of the depressed classes. So I want to know from the President, whether, I am expected to speak in support of the motion now before the House?

PRESIDENT: You need not.

MR. N. JOHN JOSEPH (*Nominated*): Sir, I beg to withdraw the motion.

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartigapalli*): Sir, I move:

To reduce the allotment of Rs. 17,448 for Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner by Re. 1.

My object in making this motion is to draw the attention of the House to the unsympathetic attitude taken by the Land Revenue Commissioner in the matter of realisation of taxes. It has been brought home to this House on previous occasions, that the country is passing through a period of economic crisis. Even the last day when I just asked for leave to make an adjournment motion it was stated that the effect of economic depression is a well-known fact and so it does not require a repetition. And, the direct result of this economic depression is the hardship experienced by the agriculturists of this country. A cry—persistent cry—plaintive cry—was heard from all parts of the country for a more sympathetic attitude on the part of the authorities in the matter of realisation of taxes. The Government had been requested to remit at least a portion of the tax for 1106. Memorials

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[Mr. A. S. Damodaran Asan.]

have been submitted, and deputations have waited. The Government were told by the memorialists, that, the real difficulty felt by the people was, scarcity of money and so they find it very difficult to pay land revenue. The Government did not do anything in the matter. They appointed a Committee. That Commitee, after consideration, submitted a proposal, that, at least coercive steps may be stayed with regard to realisation of land revenue. That proposal was considered to be very urgent by the Committee, and that Committee, if I remember right, even at its first meeting, considered this and submitted its proposal. Government have not adequately responded to that proposal.

Sir, in a notification published in the Government Gazette, the Land Revenue Commissioner has represented, that, since land revenue is a first charge upon the land, and, since prices of agricultural commodities now prevailing are not less than that prevailed at the time of the settlement rates, the ryots are well able to pay the land revenue. First of all, I do not know whether the Land Revenue Commissioner is the fittest man to give an opinion as to the ability of the ryot to pay taxes. Because, it appears, that he is concerned with the realisation of land revenue alone and he has forgotten the fact that at the time of the Settlement, the income of the Travancore Government was only less than Rs. 80 lakhs. Whereas now, it has increased three-fold. About 2 crores and 40 lakhsthe Travancore Government are receiving from the people of this country. Therefore, Government are realising three times the revenue they received at the time of the Settlement. The Land Revenue Commissioner says, that land revenue is a first charge upon land and the people are well able to pay. Whether it is a first charge or something else which could be realised with greater expediency, I do not know, how, the ability of the ryot to pay tax could be increased. As I suggested, the real difficulty in the country is with regard to the scarcity of money. The Government in the Administration Report of the Land Revenue Department at page 3 have observed as follows :—

"The number of demand notices issued showed a decrease as also the number of cases moveables distrained and immovables attached. The number of moveables and immoveables increased by 132. The increase was perceptible in the Quilon Division being 891 against642 in 1101, the amount involved being Rs. 14,305 against Rs. 9,327 in 1104. The increase is attributed to the heavy fall in the price of agricultural produce and the consequent tightness of the money market during the year."

This is with regard to 1105. Today in anwer to an interpellation of mine it was stated that the demand notices issued this year from Mavelikara taluk are about 35 per cent. more than that issued in 1105. If the argument advanced there that the increase in the number of demand notices and other things is due to the fall in the price of the agricultural produce, one could imagine how far it has gone down from what it was in 1105. Sir, from what the Land Revenue Commissioner just say

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from his report, it appears, that his only concern is about land revenue and because land revenue is the first charge he could get it and that the people are able to pay it. The reason why we ask for remission in the Land Revenue is, that this is a revenue which is directly realised from the people and which if not paid, the Government will take coercive steps. It is not because land revenue is the last charge upon a porperty. But, that is the direct source of revenue. That is the place where a person could be compelled to pay the amount. As regards customs and other things there is no direct means of enforcing payment of amounts. This is the direct means and if that is not paid they can resort to coercive steps. This morning I asked Government the reason for the increase in the issue of demand notices in Mavelikara taluk and whether the Peishkars and Tahsildars have specially instructed the Revenue Officers to take coercive steps without any leniancy. The answer was that the Government are not aware Sir, from what I have heard, I could say that the Revenue Officers in order to attach movable properties are just removing the dish and plate from the house of the defaulting tax-payer. The inmates of the house may be taking *kanji* in dishes. When revenue authorities approach them, for realising land taxes, you can find the people taking *kanji* in their dishes. The inmates of the house are under the impression that if they take *kanji* slowly the Revenue Officers may go away without attaching the dish. Whatever be the human elemant in a Proverthikar, he has to obey the orders of Government. After the people have finished their *kanji*, their dish and plates are attached. This is the thing done by the Revenue Officers. It is also seen that they have been asked to submit bi-weekly reports as to the progress of realisation of taxes. It is a new thing this year. All these things show that Government want to take coercive steps against the ryots. Sir, what is their condition and how do they manage? One gentleman told me, that when the Revenue Officer came to a house for attaching the property he found that about 5 persons were suffering from fever. The Proverthikar waited and waited and saw the afflicted man coming out. On seeing that, even the Proverthikar was moved to see the suffering man coming out with great shivering. He showed human feelings and as a consequence took him inside the house and consoled him. These are the conditions that prevail in the country. For the realisation of land tax and for the sake of earning his bread, how a Revenue Officer has to exercise his powers, is demonstrated by those two instances. The Government should show their kindly feelings by giving remission of tax. The tax remitted will be with the people. It is they who feel the difficulty. Give them relief when it is absolutely needed. It is not misplaced leniency. It is something which has to be shown. I am extremely sorry, that the Land Revenue Commissioner is arguing in that Shylockian fashion demanding his pound of flesh irrespective of the fact whether the ship has sunk or not. That is, whether the people are able to pay or not, the Land Revenue Commissioner wants to realise tax.

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MR. KAYALAM PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*) : Will the proportion of produce that was necessary for payment of tax at the Settlement be enough for payment of tax now?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): I would ask now another question. May I know whether the Additional Head Sirkar Vakil could say how much money was spent by his forefathers for their daily subsistence? I say, he must be spending now 10 times more than what was spent before. The standard of living has gone up. You don't expect a man to pay taxes when he is starving. To ask him to give all the produce from his garden for payment of land revenue when he is actually starving is very very hard.

MR. KAYALAM PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*) : Is there dearth of food stuffs now?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*) : There is dearth of food stuffs for those who want food stuffs. There is no dearth among the high paid officers and among the landed gentry. But for a man who has no cash for purchasing food stuffs, there is—

MR. KAYALAM PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*) : Has the poor man to pay tax?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): By poor man, I do not say, that a man who has no inch of land. I say, a man who could not make a living from his property find it very difficult to pay tax. He has to make both ends meet in spite of his property. There is dearth of money. What is the use of our referring him to the Imperial Bank or to the Huzur Treasury and say that there is plenty of money? Of what avail is it to the poor man? That is the real difficulty.

MR. KAYALAM PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*): Has the poor man to pay land tax?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): In Travancore, almost all people will have few cents of paddy lands or one or two cocoanut trees. Even supposing that a poor man has no land, when his creditor happens to be a landed man and he presses upon the landless man, the latter also suffers.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income-Tax Commissioner*) : What is the principle of taxation on land? Is it in proportion to one's expenses or in proportion to the produce from the land?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*) : If I remember right, what has been stated by a previous Dewan Mr. Rama Aiyangar, when he got down all the important people from different parts of the State and explained to them the principle on which land revenue is to be fixed, is that Government in fixing taxation should always look upon the prosperity of the people of the country. He wanted just sufficient money to carry on the administration. He even said, that taking more than what was necessary for the carrying on of Government was doing the greatest harm to the country and that was why you see

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that the settlement was so adjusted. If the Land Revenue Commissioner remembers that fact, it was stated in the Proclamation, that the prices of commodities fixed at the time of the previous settlements will be followed as far as possible in order to see that people are not burdened unnecessarily with tax—

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): Is the member aware that it is only his settlement rates that have been adopted?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): If I am allowed to speak on the principle of taxation on land and other things, and if I am given sufficient time, I will try to explain it in the best manner I could. The principle of taxation is a very big question. As to what Mr. Rama Aiyangar said and whether they were followed and how the settlement was finally done, etc, I can say, but—

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): I want only to know whether it is to be according to one's family expenses or in proportion to the produce from the land?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): In any civilised Government all that is looked after is, whether, a person, after meeting his usual expenses, is able to pay a portion of the income as tax to the State. That is the policy adopted by all civilised Governments. It is the duty of the Government to look after the good of the governed. They tax only after seeing whether a man could reasonably pay a portion of his income after meeting his bare expenses, and that is why, in England and other countries, we find that they try to realise more revenue from persons of higher income by imposing supertax and all that.

MR. E. V. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Kottarakara* cum *Kunnattur*): Is it the opinion of the member, that return from land is getting poorer and poorer and the expenses of cultivation higher and higher?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikra* cum *Kartikapalli*): That question cannot be answered in a sentence. The expenses may be going up in some cases and going down in some others. My suggestion is, that owing to repeated cultivation, fertility of the land is degenerating and lands are not as much yielding as they were. So, I have to answer him in the positive. There are other circumstances also. People are cultivating more lands and that is why new areas are being opened up. In all those cases there may be larger income from the lands. But we have to look to the standard of living.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): What percentage of gross profits, a cultivator was having as net profits in 1105?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): One could not say.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): Can you say roughly?

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MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*) : I say, that in certain cases, people do not get any profit, while in certain other cases pay the tax from their pockets. In certain cases owing to floods the yield may be very poor. There is also failure of crops. Just to see that their land is not sold for arreas of land revenue, the people had to borrow money and pay land revenue. They did not get a few rupees even from hundereds of acres of paddy lands. I would draw the attention of the Land Revenue Commissioner to paddy lands at Noornad, which place he happens to be familiar with as he was a Division Peishkar for Quilon Division for some time. He must know that there are more than 1000 acres where people have become impoverished, because their lands have not fetched enough to pay tax during the last so many years.

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*): I would like to know whether land revenue is a tax due on a debt?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*) : There is no case of debt here. How does it arise I do not know.

Even America which has absolutely no obligation to see to the protection of other countries, has declared a moratorium and given time to all debtor countries. I do not know why the Travancore Government, in the interests of the Government as well as the governed, could not give some time to the people and give remission of tax.

MR. E. V. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Kottrakara* cum *Kunnattur*): Is there any instance of any other country where land revenue is remitted?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*) : I think in Punjab there was remission.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*) : Was it due to economic depression?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*) : It is owing to the difficulty of the people to pay tax.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*) : Is that due to economic depression is my question?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*) : That also must have been one of the reasons.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*) : Is this fact also published in the papers?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*) : I do not entirely rely on papers.

PRESIDENT : You are speaking on your personal knowledge?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli* : Not personal knowledge.

MR R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*) : What is the commutation rate per para of paddy in your division?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*) : It is I think seven and one-fourth chackrams.

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MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): Is the member aware that Ambalapuzha people applied to Government that commutation rate may be changed to 12 chackrams per para ?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): Yes. I was one of those who led the deputation. But so far as I know my party stood for 10 chackrams. Since the Land Revenue Commissioner says that because some people wanted the commutation rate to be changed to 12 chackrams I do not question its correctness. So, there must be two memorialists one demanding 12 and another 10 chackrams.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): So that means that they are able to pay at 12 chackrams per para.

MR. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*) The recommendations of the head of a department should be made after looking into the fact whether a ryot is in a position to pay tax after meeting his necessaries of life.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): A Kandukrishi ryot is able to pay at 12 chackrams per para after meeting his expenses.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): It is an argument, which I referred previously, that comes from an unsympathetic heartless creditor.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): My question is, is a Kandukrishi ryot able to pay at the rate of 12 chackrams per para?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): I do not say that, if a cultivator realises all that is possible from his lands without taking even a small portion for his livelihood and if he sells all that he could not pay land tax. That is not my case. What is his condition to-day when compared with that of 2 years back?

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): At Ambalapuzha, is not a Kandukrishi ryot able to pay at 12 chackrams per para ?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): The ability could be seen later on. The memorialists stated first that they were prepared to pay at the rate of 12 chackrams. But they were unable to pay at that rate and at present 10 chackrams is felt to be high. So what I want to impress upon the Government is, that there is very great difficulty for payment of tax and there is real hardship experienced by the ryots.

MR. KAYALAM PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*): Whatever be the proportion that was intended to be set apart for payment of land tax at the time of Settlement, could that rate be set apart now also ?

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MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): It could not be. My argument is this. As I suggested, there is the customs. The tariff value of copra in 1068 was Rs. 8. Till recently Rs. 20 and from that the Government have reduced it to Rs. 16. So now even the reduced rate is nearly double. So much so, it touches the purse of the cocoanut cultivator. Similarly in all things, we find an increase.

MR. K. PADMANABHA PANIKKAR (*Ambalapuzha*): Has not the expenses for cultivation increased in recent years?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): I thank the member for timely suggestion. Owing to the decrease in the price of paddy, and secondly due to the fact that the labour being better organised and the necessaries of life have increased, you have to pay higher wages to labourers, and so, the cost of cultivation has doubled.

MR. RAMA VARMA RAJA (*Edavagai*): മുപ്പതുവർഷത്തിനുമുമ്പ് നിലത്തിനുണ്ടായിരുന്ന വിലക്കും ഇപ്പോഴത്തെവിലക്കും തമ്മിൽ എന്തു വ്യത്യാസമുണ്ട്?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): I think, the prices must have gone up five-fold from what it was thirty years back. I may assure the member, that during the last one year, the price of the land must have gone down at least by 50 per cent. owing to the fall in prices. What I suggest is, that it is the duty of the Government to give remission of a substantial portion of tax and to extend the period of payment for the remaining tax due from the ryots. These are the two steps that are absolutely necessary, to save the country from the present economic crisis, to generate confidence in the people about the good intentions of the Government, and to avert further calamities that might possibly arise in the future. With these words, I place the motion before the House.

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): I support Mr. Asan's motion. The Land Revenue Commissioner put several questions to Mr. Asan and tried to elicit an answer that would suit him. Last day when I was speaking on the subject, he asked me whether I knew the proportion of the land revenue to the total value of the produce raised on land. He was kind enough to tell me that it was somewhere about 18 per cent.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): 16 per cent. for wet lands when the yield is tenfold.

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): Calculated at that rat it will be seen, that 37 lakhs of rupees realised by Government in the shape of land revenue represents 16 per cent.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): He has about 33 per cent. as net profits even now in terms of money.

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MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*) : Yes, the 33 Lakhs realised by Government represents 16 per cent. of the total yield collected from lands. At that rate the total value of produce raised would be about 6 and a quarter times that amount. That will come to about 198 lakhs of rupees. That, I believe, will be, the total value of the crops raised on land. You will find that 250 lakhs of rupees are being collected from the people of this country by way of tax on various items.

If that were so, if with this 198 lakhs of rupees worth of agricultural produce we are called upon to replenish the Travancore Treasury to the extent of Rs. 250 lakhs, you can imagine, Sir, the immense difficulty of the agriculturists of Travancore. It may be argued, perhaps, that a large portion of this 250 lakhs, that we contribute to the revenues of the Government, is made up of customs revenue. But I maintain that that fact does not materially affect my calculation. Because even deducting the fairly good portion of the total revenue contributed by the Customs Department, you will find that the tax paid by the land holder here is much more than the value of his products from land.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*) : Is the member aware that tax is collected from garden lands also ?

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*) : Yes; I believe the 33 lakhs of rupees are collected from garden lands and paddy lands.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*) : About 18 lakhs.

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*) : And considering the proportion suggested by the Land Revenue Commissioner, namely 16 per cent. of the total yield, my calculation, that about 198 lakhs of rupees worth of produce is being raised in Travancore.....

MR. R. VAIDYALINGOM PILLAI (*Registrar of Co-operative Societies and Joint Stock Companies, and Protector of Depressed Classes*) : May I point out that that proportion affects only wet lands ?

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): May be ; and there may be a different proportion with regard to garden lands ; and that may be even less. The total value of crops raised in Travancore may not be even 190 lakhs as the calculation would show. Let it be more or less.

MR. KAYALAM PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*) : The proportion is with reference to the produce in *kind* and not with reference to its money value.

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*) : Yes. I valued it at this rate because the Land Revenue Commissioner said that the value of the produce that is being obtained at present is not in any way less than the price that obtained in 1070. It is for showing that that basis of calculation is wrong that I refer to these figures.

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[Mr. S. Krishna Pillai.]

If, therefore, we are able to collect or raise only Rs. 198 lakhs worth of produce from our land, how would it be possible for us to pay 240 or 250 lakhs of rupees to Government?

MR. KAYALAM PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*): It is, *not less* than Rs. 190 lakhs; but it is .....

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): I shall put the figure as high as possible and assume that we produce Rs. 250 lakhs worth of products from our lands. Even then, it would be only just sufficient for us to pay the revenue due to Government. The Registration Department takes some money from us. A portion of our income goes to Stamps; another portion for Civil Justice and a fourth to Criminal Justice; and a fifth to Education. And then, we have to pay land tax.

MR. R. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Financial Secretary to Government*): What about income tax?

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): There is income tax also.

MR. M. GOVINDAN (*Nominated*): Besides land, are there not other sources of income?

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): Yes. I shall take the agriculturist as the unit of the State. He collects all the agricultural produce by the sale of which other sources of income also are being derived. The customs revenue, realised at Arukutty and other frontier places is nothing but a tax on the agricultural produce of the State. Income tax is only a proportion of the income derived from other sources.

All that I want to impress upon the House is that the calculation made by the Land Revenue Commissioner cannot be considered as quite correct. When he said that the present land tax has been fixed in accordance with the rate prevailing about 30 years ago and that there was no hardship even now since the present prices of commodities were not less than what they were some 30 years ago, he did not take into account the enormous increase in the taxes that the land holder has to pay now. If that is also taken into consideration you would find, Sir, that it is not possible for the ordinary land holder to pay land revenue at present.

The Land Revenue Commissioner asked my friend Mr. Asan whether any other State had made any remission of land tax; and also wanted to know the reasons for such remissions if any. What I want to bring to the attention of this House is that some remission of land tax *has* been made elsewhere. It is not necessary for me to find out the reasons. The Land Revenue Commissioner's question implies that the grant of remission of land revenue is a thing which he cannot imagine. Sir, there is absolutely nothing wrong in remitting land revenue when necessity arises.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara cum Kartikapalli*): Is not the member aware that, in 1040, even in this State, there was remission of land tax amounting to more than Rs. 2 lakhs on the whole?

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MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): Even in 1930 or 1931, land tax has been remitted.

I want to impress upon Government only the *principle* of remission of taxes when necessary. I would also urge that even in the first instance land revenue must be remitted because the agriculturists form the largest proportion of the people of the State. The Report of the Banking Enquiry Committee shows that the position of the ordinary agriculturists in Travancore is much worse than it was before. The Nayar Regulation, the Nanjanad Vellala Regulation and the Ezhava Regulation have caused the splitting of the agricultural holdings into very small uneconomic bits of land, and consequently there has been economic ruin of the agriculturists. Therefore, I submit, the Government must take a more sympathetic view of the difficulties of the agriculturists and grant at least a partial remission of land-tax.

From an examination of the answer that has been supplied to Mr. Asan, in reply to his interpellation about the coercive steps taken in the Mavelikara and Kartikapalli taluks, I am led to infer that the order, that has been issued by Government to suspend coercive steps till the 31st of Karkatakam, is a dead letter and has not been acted upon.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): When was that order passed?

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): I believe, a month ago; I am not sure.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): To which period does the statement furnished to Mr. Asan in reply to his interpellation, relate?

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): 1105 and 1106, I think.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): I suppose the issue of demand notices does not amount to coercive steps?

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): That is the first step in that direction. Without that notice you cannot distrain or attach property.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): It is only a notice.

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): But it is the first step for further stages in the coercive action. Without the demand notice you cannot pursue the tenant.

It is clear therefore, Sir, from the answer given to Mr. Asan that the Government order to postpone coercive steps to the end of Karkatakam has been treated as a mere dead letter. The order also says that the Tahsildars have been instructed not to press those who, from sheer inability to pay the tax due, have made default in payment.

PRESIDENT: It is clear that the figures furnished to Mr. Asan elate to a period prior to the date of the Government order.

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MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): Anyhow, Sir, during this period of economic distress, so many demand notices have been issued.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): But, no fee is proposed to be collected for these demand notices.

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): Only in the case of those who manage to pay the tax due before the 31st Karkatakam, and not the others. That does not help the poor ryot who is really not able to pay.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): Even those, from whom the demand notice fee has been collected, would get back the fee if they pay their tax before the end of this month.

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Karunagapalli*): But, what about the poor who are not able to pay, who would not be able to pay the full tax due even by the end of this month, and who really need the concession? This shows that Government have not taken a sympathetic view of the situation. The Gazette shows that lands are being sold in auction indiscriminately. It is really wonderful that the Tahsildars have not been able to find even a single instance in which the ryot is really unable to pay. Further, how is the ryot to convince the Tahsildar that he is really not in a position to pay? These are matters that the Government have to take into consideration.

As regards the *kandukrishi* tenant, last year, they were paying at the rate of 24 chs. This year they were promised a reduction of 6 chs.; and they now claim a further reduction of 6 chs. Therefore, they would be paying now only just half of what they were paying last year. Now, Sir, if the Government admit that there is some principle in making this reduction in the case of *kandukrishi* tenants, I submit, the ordinary tenant also is entitled to the same concession. I submit, that this half remission must be allowed in the case of the *ayacut* landholders also. That is the point that the Government have to consider; and not whether the tenant is paying something more than the *nirak* rate of paddy, something more than the 7¼ chs. *nirak* rate that obtained in the Kartikapalli taluk in 1070. I suppose, the extreme meaninglessness of the suggestion of the Land Revenue Commissioner would now be clear to the House. It should not be understood that I am now blaming the Government for showing concession to the *kandukrishi* tenant. My point is that, as Government have rightly accepted the principle of making 50 per cent. reduction in the case of the *kandukrishi* tenant, they must extend the concession also to the ordinary tenant of *pandarapattom* lands.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): Sir, I oppose the motion. It has been more or less admitted that there has been no diminution in the yield from land. There has been a fall in the price of agricultural products to the extent of about 50 per cent. It has been estimated by enquiries made throughout the State that the cultivator of land has been getting for himself 70 per cent. of the gross produce out of the land. Now, as

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the price of agricultural products has gone down by about 50 per cent. the cultivator though gets, 70 per cent. of the gross produce of land in hand as of old, we get only 35 per cent. *in terms of money*. Tax, Sir, is the first charge on land. So, when the landholder gets a net profit of about 35 per cent. my view is, that he cannot legitimately claim any reduction in the tax. It is true that he has only less money for personal and family expenses. But, the tax on land is not in proportion to his expenses. It is in proportion to the produce of land.

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon*): I wish to add a few words on the motion proposed by Mr. Asan to discuss the general policy, the general policy of the incidence of taxation obtaining in this country.

There are two kinds of taxes which the Government can depend upon for carrying their legitimate work. One is direct taxation and the other indirect taxation. It cannot be denied that a Government, which has got to function, has to depend greatly on direct taxation. What I want to point out to this House, as I had occassion to remark in the course of the general discussion on the Budget, is that the incidence of taxation has not been equally distributed among the people living in this country.

Sir, one-third of the land in this country is reserved forest; another third belongs to the *jenmies*; and the rest is distributed among the poor ryots in the country. The difficulty with regard to the incidence of taxation, especially at a time of financial stringency like this, arises because of the intensity of the suffering that the poor tax-payer, that is one-third of the population of this country, one-third of the occupiers of land here, has to undergo. While two-thirds of the land in the country is tax-free, the occupiers of the remaining one-third alone have to bear the whole burden of taxation. I want the Government to take early steps to see that this source of revenue is distributed among all classes of people in the State. It may be too much for me to suggest the methods of realising taxes from people who hold lands free of tax now. Government may impose income tax or even super tax and realise a portion of their revenue from the owners of these tax-free lands as well. When the Government get more money like that, it would be easy for them to distribute the incidence of taxation more fairly among the people. What they get from the occupiers of tax-free land, they may remit in the case of the people who now bear the whole of the burden of the incidence of taxation. The occupiers of tax-free land also enjoy all the amenities of life that the Government supply them at the expense of the poor ryots who occupy only one-third of the land in the country and pay all the taxes which go to form the land revenue of the Government. I do not think anybody can blame the Government for charging men who are not now paying anything to the Government for its functioning and who are getting all the benefits of the Government just like the people who pay full tax to Government.

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MR. K. P. ABRAHAM (*Muvattupuzha* cum *Todupuzha*): May I point out to the member that in the case of *jenmom* lands the tenants pay *their* contribution of tax, by way of *michavaram*, to the jenmies?

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon*): Exactly that is why I say that the *jenmies* also must be made to contribute their share to the Government for the benefit of Government that they enjoy just like the other tax-paying people of the country. The *michavaram* that the *jenmies* get is a source of income which is absolutely tax-free. That is why I suggest that a portion of it must be contributed to the Government revenue. It is accepted everywhere, in European countries also, that anybody who enjoys the benefits of Government must contribute to the revenues of the Government. I think, leaving tax-free lands to continue tax-free, the Government should not now say that they could not afford to reduce the tax on the land of the poor ryot who has all along been bearing the whole of the burden of taxation. The margin of profit that the ryot now gets is very little, and it would be very hard if the Government do not now reduce the tax on land. With regard to the lands in Kuttanad, particularly, I have heard that their margin of profit has almost dwindled into nothing and that they have now to pay the tax, due to the Government, from their pockets. They say, that, if things continue like this for a year or two, they would all be forced to abandon all the lands in order to escape from the payment of tax. That is a very serious matter which the Government have to consider, especially as this is a country which depends chiefly on its agricultural resources. The Government should never allow the production of food-stuffs in the country to go down on any account. On the other hand, it is their paramount duty to see that the country is made self-sufficient in the matter of the production of food-stuffs. Some people have suggested a sliding scale system of taxation. I have considered it very carefully; but I am not now in a position to hazard any opinion about it. Taxing food-stuffs is bad on principle. Insufficiency in the matter of food-stuffs is also bad. If we cannot have food-stuffs at least for the needs of our country, it is a dangerous state of affairs. The Madras Presidency was in that difficulty some years ago; but, somehow, they have now improved and have almost succeeded in producing the paddy required for their consumption. Italy, Spain and other countries which were, some years back, depending on other countries for their food-stuffs, have now increased their production of food-stuffs and are now self-sufficient in the matter. Now, Sir, the people of Burma are trying to dump their paddy here in order to see that the paddy cultivation here is extinguished if possible. I think that is the trend of the recommendation made by the Commission that was lately appointed to enquire into the causes of the fall in the price of paddy in Burma. It seems the idea of the people of Burma is to dump all their paddy, not only in Travancore, but in the whole of India and Asia, at such a low price as to force all the paddy-growers here to stop cultivation of paddy, so that, later on, when there is no paddy cultivation here, we would be forced to import Burma paddy at their price. Sir, Government have to look into the matter and do

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something. Therefore, whatever be the sacrifice that the Government may have to make, they should grant some remission of tax to the cultivator here, at this period of serious economic crisis and financial stringency. I hope the Government will act with a long vision and a generous heart.

MR. K. P. MADHAVAN PILLAI : (*Chirayinkil*) : Is it the member's suggestion that Government need grant remission only to the owners of paddy lands ?

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon*) : Not at all ; that is not my opinion. With due regard to their finances, Government must allow remission to all the cultivators in the land. I am not at all partial to the paddy cultivator.

MR. K. P. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*) : Does the member know that the price of copra has fallen considerably ?

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon*) : I know that ; and that is why I suggest that Government should grant remissions to all the land owners in the country.

MR. K. P. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*) : Is it not.....

PRESIDENT : You may make a speech if you like, Mr. Madhavan Pillai.

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon*) : I never made any distinction between paddy and cocoanut with regard to taxation. My friend is imagining certain difficulties which do not exist.

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*) : I must also support Mr. Asan's motion. I was hesitating whether I should, as a member of the Economic Depression Enquiry Committee which has not so far concluded its enquiry and report, refer to the work of that Committee. Anyhow, since the Committee has submitted an *interim* report to the Government and since the Government have considered the report and published it, I think I am free to make references to the Committee. The Economic Depression Enquiry Committee was constituted by six officials and five non-official members. The majority of this Committee made a recommendation to Government that they should be pleased to suspend all coercive steps against non-payment of taxes during the current year. The recommendation was forwarded to the Land Revenue Commissioner for remarks. He seems to have forwarded it to the Dewan Peishkars, who, in their turn, have forwarded it to the Tahsildars of the State. I do not wish to say anything about the propriety of this procedure, except that the Committee, constituted as it was by some Heads of Government Departments and some representatives of the people, Members of this Council and other non-officials, need not have been honoured by their majority report being forwarded to the Tahsildars for examination and criticism. This is not, I beg to say, anywhere in the neighbourhood of reason or propriety.

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[Mr. K. Madhavan Pillai.]

Sir, the Land Revenue Commissioner was pleased to refer to Dewan Rama Aiyangar's statement as a justification for his argument that taxation depends on the income from the land. What has Rama Aiyangar said? I have got an extract from what he wrote some years ago. He said:

> "The present inequality of assessment such as it is, is another evil of great magnitude. Generally, to the north of Trivandrum the assessment on land is very moderate and properly so owing to physical peculiarities; but in southern taluks, notably in Tovalai and Agastisvaram, the burden is both onerous and unequal, the average rate of assessment being Rs. 18 and Rs. 16 per acre. The result is that notwithstanding a good system of irrigation and a large and annually recurring expenditure for its upkeep and notwithstanding that the ryots are industrious and thrifty, complaints of over-assessment and unequal incidence of the Government demand are frequent; the margin of profit is small; there is no accumulation of capital; the bulk of the agricultural population are able to derive but a bare subsistence from the land, and the first bad season reduces them to a struggle for existence. Without a more equal distribution of taxation and a moderate and fixed assessment, it is idle to expect any great extension of cultivation or economic progress."

Sir, the economic progress that Travancore has made has been revealed by the labours of my esteemed friend, Mr. Vaidyalingom Pillai. The Banking Enquiry Committee has disclosed the fact that the average ryot of Travancore is indebted to the extent of—I am not quite sure of the accuracy of the figures—Rs. 68, and that the total indebtedness of the country amounts to something like Rs. 25 crores. Sir, that is the position of the Travancore ryot. And, Mr. Krishna Pillai thinks that, because the Government have fixed a particular rate of assessment, whatever may be the embarrassment or the difficulty of the ryot, he is bound to pay it under any circumstance. I want to point out that the Government, in this matter, cannot take the position of the creditor and treat the ryot as a debtor. The tax due to Government may be a compulsory contribution by the people for the general welfare of the country; but the tax-payer should pay it only when he is in a position to pay. It has been proved beyond the shadow of doubt that the Travancore ryot is not now able to pay it. On account of the present economic depression, he has been rendered absolutely unable to do it. In this connection, I wish to quote Mr. Krishna Pillai himself. He says:

> "In all the other Divisions, there was increase in the number of sales. The increase in the amount involved under this head is reported to be due to the heavy fall in price in agricultural produce and the consequent dearth of money"

According to his own statement, Sir, there is dearth of money in the country.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): That is not *my* statement.

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*): As Mr. Krishna Aiyangar said, I am discussing the Land Revenue Commissioner *in the abstract*. I have been reading from the Report of the Land Revenue Commissioner.

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Sir, it has been proved beyond the shadow of doubt that the Travancore ryot is heavily indebted.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*). When was the *interim* report of the Economic Depression Enquiry Committee submitted to Government?

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*): I do not know the exact date now; my memory is not so keen. I think it is about a month or two ago.

Then, Sir, let me quote what Mr. Mahadeva Aiyar says in his Land Revenue Manual:

> "The average rate per acre of wet land under *pattom* tenure both channel-fed and river-fed comes to Rs. 16-27-12, or twice as much as the average, that is, Rs. 8-18-4. The comparison becomes more striking if we take the figures given in the Madras Manual of Administration. The statement given there shows that the average assessment in 20 settled districts .....is the highest for the Madras Presidency."

Sir, the Banking Enquiry Committee said that, in Nanjanad, the average tax per acre of land was Rs. 28. Sir, this is higher than the highest obtaining in any part of India.

MR. R. VAIDYALINGOM PILLAI (*Registrar of Co-operative Societies and Joint Stock Companies, and Protector of Depressed Classes*). May I point out that that is the *maximum* and not the *average* in South Travancore?

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*): The average is Rs. 16 odd as could be seen from my extract from Mr. Mahadeva Aiyar's statement.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): That is for *pattom* tenure and not for all tenures.

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*): May I know then, what is the average for all tenures?

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): Rs 12.

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*): I was told it was Rs. 18.

Then, Sir, what is the incidence of taxation here compared with that in British India? It is Re. 1 ch. 1 c. 5 for last year; and in British India it is about Re. 1 as. 7.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): Is it on the basis of population or on the basis of the extent of occupied land that my friend is now calculating the incidence of taxation?

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*): I am speaking of the incidence of taxation per head of population. I am coming to the other aspect also.

Sir, as could be seen from the figures I have quoted, we are here paying 30 chs. for 63 cents of land, while in British India, the people are paying only about 41 chs. for 111 cents of land. Therefore, for 111 cents, our rate would come to about 53 chs. that is, 12 chs. more than

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[Mr K. Madhavan Pillai.]

the rate in British India. And then, another peculiar feature in Travancore is that we are taxed not only on our lands but on our produces as well; because we levy a duty on all our exports.

MR. R. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Is there any duty on jute?

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*): It is a monoply. It is only a nominal thing. It is not duty.

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon*): Has the Spanish Government put a tariff on paddy?

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*): Export or import?

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon*): Export.

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*): I do not know. So far as British India is concerned, they do not levy any duty on exports.

MR. R. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Financial Secretary to Government*): May I know from the member whether there is any duty on hides and skin?

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*): It is only protective duty. Why do you mistake the terms.

There is no doubt that Travancore is overtaxed compared with British India. My friend Mr. Krishna Pillai says that Travancore people are able to pay the tax. The Trivandrum Dewan Peishkar declared the other day that he was attaching imoveables belonging to the defaulters for the reason that to seize and remove his movables affects their self-respect and lowers them in the estimation of their neighbours. If a man has money, would be allow himself to be thus insulted and humiliated? Mr. Krishna Pillai's plea that the royts are able to pay is therefore mishievous.

I am reading for the information of the House a paragraph that appears in one of the old reports. One of the Dewan Peishkars was asked why he was issuing more demand notices. And his reply is embodied in the following report.

"The Dewan Peishkar, Trivandrum, reports that the prevalence of cholera in several taluks and the failure of crops owing to the scarcity of water were some of the factors which contributed to the failure of pattadars to pay their dues in time and that the increase in the number of demand notices issued and in the number of distraint or attachment notices was due to the prompt steps taken for the realisation of arrears."

This is the way and circumstances under which Government Officers realise tax from the people.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): In what year was it?

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*): In 1104.

As regards the demand notices, I may bring to the notice of the House another fact. In Madras they have got 7 crores and 90 lakhs of rupees to be realised as land tax. There they have issued only 7 lakhs of

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notices for the purpose of realisation. But here for realising 40 lakhs of rupees Government have issued 4 lakhs of notices. You have realised from the defaulters an amount which is in excess of the amount levied by the criminal courts for criminal offences. The fees imposed come to Rs. 60,000 while the demand notices bring a much larger sum. This is the way in which men who are unable to pay the tax are treated by the Government. In collecting taxes, Government look into the capacity of the tax-payer. If he is able, will he hesitate to pay? Here we have a number of small land holders living in small huts. There are no capitalists. They are all very small land holders. If you carefully examine, you will find that more than one-third of the Pattadars pay $\frac{3}{4}$ of a rupee and less. While this is the condition of things here, it is strange to notice that the Land Revenue Commissioner comes forward and says that the people are able to pay.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): Is the member in a position to say what other recommendations the Committee have made to the Government.

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*): I am not able to say that. If the President of the Committee allows, I shall say.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): Sir, I had no idea of taking part in this discussion till the House was reminded by Dr. Madhavan Pillai of the value that Government attach to the recommendations of a committee constituted by them and composed of official and non-official members. Sir, the committee was constituted in order that Government might be advised as to what they should do to help the people at a crisis like this. Now as was mentioned here the committee was composed of very high placed and responsible officials of Government and a few equally responsible non-officials and the majority of the committee was also official in its composition. They thought it necessary to make certain urgent proposals without waiting till the end of their enquiry and consideration and evidently they did so out of anxiety to see that the Government were given proper advice in time to enable them to take effective measures to help the people. The recommendation in regard to the adoption of coercive measures seem to have been the only one they thought very urgent and so they made that recommendation. Of course, I am speaking subject to correction because I am not in possession of all the facts. Anyhow from what appears from the G. O. it seems that this was the only recommendation.

RAO SAHIB DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Census Commissioner*): May I know what exactly the recommendation of the Committee was?

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): I am referring to the G. O a copy of which was given to me.

RAO SAHIB DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Census Commissioner*): The exact recommendation of the Committee was that coercive action should be suspended. We did not recommend that payment of taxes should be suspended or stopped. We did not specify the period during which

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[Rao Sahib Dr. N. Kunjan Pillai.]

the coercive action should be suspended. Government thought it fit to suspend it till the end of this year.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): So, am I to take it that the Committee suggested that such steps should be kept in abeyance for such time as was found to be necessary or in other words till better conditions came in to existence or till the economic distress was over?

Anyhow they made that recommendation. The point that I mean to emphasise is this, Sir. The Committee unanimously, or the majority of them thought that this should be immediately done. They made that recommendation: Government were not in a position to see eye to eye with them. It seems to me from the speech of Mr. Madhavan Pillai that this proposal was subjected to the scrutiny of the Land Revenue Officers down to the Tahsildars. From that we can understand the value attached by Government to the recommendations of that Committee. Now that has been done. Even the very humble and moderate recommendations of that Committee Government were not prepared to accept in *toto*. What they have done is to ask the Land Revenue Officers to desist from resorting to coercive steps in suitable cases and if payments were made by the end of the year, not to realise notice fees. After all that is very little. I liked to know when the recommendation was made. But Mr. Madhavan Pillai was not in a position to give me the information. I wanted to see how prompt Government were in the matter.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): Does the member know that the recommendation was dated 29th May 1931?

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): Yes, and the G. O. was issued on the 14th July. It was after one and a half months from the date of the recommendation. The recommendation was that coercive steps should not be resorted to for the revenue due this year. Government slept over the matter for one and a half months, if these dates are correct. I speak subject to correction.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): It had to be referred to the Land Revenue Department for report.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): Whatever that be, I suppose the head of the department was a member of the committee which made this recommendation and this is a matter which was referred to him. It is strange that the opinion of the Tahsildars should be considered to be very important in a matter like this where the heads of departments and the representatives of the people have thought that it was quite essential.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): May I inform the member that the recommendation was made by the committee before they toured round the country?

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): Anyhow the committee thought that the recommendation should be made. Does the Chief

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Secretary think that touring round the country alone will enable the committee to make a proper recommendation ?

RAO SAHIB DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Census Commissioner*) : May I know whether the member thinks that the Government have not accepted the recommendation of the committee ?

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*) : So far as I can see they have not accepted.

RAO SAHIB DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Census Commissioner*) : They have stopped coercive action till the end of this year.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*) : Have they done it in every case ?

RAO SAHIB DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Census Commissioner*) : They will do it wherever they find it necessary to do so.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*) : They may not easily find it necessary.

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*) : What is the meaning in deserving cases ?

MR. A THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*) : The President of the committee who made this recommendation says that it is accepted. He wants other people to believe that the recommendation is accepted. My point is that his recommendation was not accepted. I suppose Dr. Kunjan Pillai will not contradict me when I say that the recommendation of the committee was that no coercive steps should be taken until the end of this year. This has not been accepted. Government cannot be congratulated on the view they have taken of the recommendation.

One other thing also I wish to emphasise. Government can reconsider this, the all-important recommendation which the committee thought it necessary to make even before they did anything else, or as the Chief Secretary said even before they toured round the State. Seeing how this has fared I have my own fears about the fate of the other recommendations which the committee may make. I may tell the Government that they should not take a similar view of the other recommendations either. It is difficult to see why the recommendations of the committee composed of officers like the Agricultural Director cannot be accepted by Government. They must be recommendations made with due deference to the financial difficulties of Government. The majority of the members must be in a position to consider all the aspects of the question and it is that fact which gives due weight to the recommendation. I do not know what the recommendations are. I only urge upon Government that those recommendations must be reconsidered with due regard to the requirements of the situation. I also understand that the official view and the non-official view were not in agreement in the committee. I hope the views of the non-officials will also receive due consideration.

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[Mr. A. Thanu Pillai.]

The Government should not limit their decisions to the recommendations of the officials alone. They must consider the opinion of the non-officials as well and deal with the matter in the best manner possible. I support the motion.

RAO SAHIB DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Census Commissioner*) : May I inform the member that the committee did not send any recommendation to the Government. They passed certain resolutions at the last meeting and these will form the basis of the report of the committee.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*) : Is it a speech or a question ?

RAO SAHIB DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Census Commissioner*) : I am only informing the House. I started with : "may I inform the member."

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*) : May I take it that these resolutions form the basis of the recommendation that they mean to make ?

RAO SAHIB DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Census Commissioner*) : Yes.

MR. K. P. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Shertallai*) : Sir, I rise to support the motion of Mr. Asan mainly because I come from a place where the recommendation of the Land Revenue Commissioner has mainly affected our people because the cocoanut palms which form the main produce in agriculture in the taluk of Shertalai become very expensive as the cultivators have to water them for six months of the year so that one fourth of the income derived from agriculture shall be expended on the land and it is only a portion of the income of the product remaining after they have expended on the amount that has to be paid as tax. The order of the Government at this particular juncture when economic distress is prevalent throughout the land affects the people of Shertallai to a greater extent than any other people in the whole State. My request to the House and the Government is that the order of Government may at this juncture be reconsidered in view of the fact that it barely gives a small margin of income to the ryots in the taluk of Shertallai after meeting all the expenses, and payment of tax. This question must deserve the earnest attention of Government. I have also to submit at this stage that there is general remission of tax in the whole of the world. I said in the general discussion of the Budget that there was remission of about 67 lakhs of rupees in the United States and 15 lakhs in Burma. I am surprised to find that this committee which is constituted to enquire into the economic distress of this very same House (*no*) ; on a motion at the instance of this House, even though it has recommended that there must be some concession given to the ryots, even though the recommendation has some authoritative effect because the Land Revenue Commissioner was also a member of the Committee, still the Commissioner only recommend to Government to postpone the payment till the end of the year. Such a recommendation coming as it does from a man who has been in charge of Kottayam Division and who had occasion to know the condition of the people there is not quite justifiable.

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Even though he has recommended and even though Government have acted up to a certain extent, it is open for the Government to reconsider it and pass orders which will be consistent with the welfare of the people and popular demands of the country at the present time.

I may also point out that with regard to the customs duty that is prevailing at the further end of Shertallai *i. e.*, Arukutty there is no decrease. All these duties are paid to the Government either as customs duty or export duty together with the land revenue. All these are very heavy imports now raised from the people. So my prayer to Government is that they must reconsider the recommendation of the Land Revenue Commissioner and do some thing to relieve the destress of the people.

MR. N. A. SUNDARAM PILLAI (*Tovala*) : Sir, while we are on this subject of remission of tax, I, as the representative of the people of Nanjanad, would like to put in a few words regarding their case. The condition of Nanjanad is very poor indeed. The produce from the land has been going down from year to year. We have been taxed to the extent of Rs. 28 per acre and we get by way of income only 10 *Kottas* of paddy calculated at the present rate the value of which will come to nearly Rs. 50 and we have to spend something like Rs. 60 for cultivating the land itself. The Government come in and demand a revenue to the extent of Rs. 28 per acre which is as exorbitant as anything can be. The poor ryot, having a conservative attachment to the land he tills finding it rather impossible to separate himself from it, so much so, what little he earns, he earns for the Government to be paid in the shape of land tax and also for the money lenders to whom he has to pay a heavy interest. Indeed our condition is so very miserable in Nanjanad that we find it hard to make both ends meet. The average debt of an acre in Nanjanad is Rs. 304. The average debt of a family is Rs. 380. The average debt per head is Rs. 68. That of an agricultural family is Rs. 1454. I base my information on the report of the Banking Enquiry Committee. Think of the condition of the agriculturist in Nanjanad. We, poor agriculturists, have to pay a heavy tax, incur expenses in connection with cultivation and we have to find out something to live upon. This is the state under which we are living. We are not only in chronic poverty but also in misery. Now under the present prevailing prices of paddy we are asked to pay land tax, at the older rates. Though orders have been issued to delay the payment to the end of this year, the subordinates of the Land Revenue Department have been demanding taxes at the usual rate and lands have been brought under attachment even to-day. Sir, I am not at all satisfied that the Government instructions are being carried loyally and faithfully by their subordinate officers, on whom the work of actual collection rests. They are as severe and as hard hearted as ever. Even this belated concession—concession if I may call it so—gives as little or no relief, when it comes to the matter of actual working in the hands of the Government subordinates. So I request the Government to investigate the matter and

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[Mr. N. A. Sundaram Pillai.]

issue orders to the subordinate officers, that the orders of the Government are enforced and see that they are sympathetic towards the ryots. With these observations I resume my seat.

MR. N. K. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): Sir, I would also most whole heartedly support the motion of Mr. Damodaran Asan and in doing so I fully endorse the views expressed by him regarding the necessity of concessions and remissions at a time when the ryots are on the throes of an acute economic crisis. Sir, that we are financially in most distressing circumstances has been the burden of all the speeches that we have been hearing since this the Fourth Council met in this Hall. Therefore I would, in the first place, submit that it is absolutely necessary at this juncture that the Government should ungrudgingly go to the rescue of the ryots and help them out of their financial depression. Some reference was made in the course of the speech of a predecessor of mine to the remissions made by some Indian States in North India. I think my friend Mr. Asan referred to Punjab. This morning I read in a paper that in the small state of Kapurthala, remission was made to the extent of one lakh of rupees on account of the incapcity of the ryots to pay the land revenue. The other day the Financial Secretary was reading to us during the discussion of the Budget for the Public Works Department, the figures for Mysore, just to show that we stand favourably in the allotment for Public Works. We should go further north of Mysore, Sir, and take a leaf out of States like Kapurthala in the matter of collecting land revenue and giving remissions. Sir, much has been said about the G. O. recently published by the Government. As for that, what I have to submit is that people have not been able to get practically any benefit out of this G. O. In the first place, it has come out at the fag end of the year. Although the Depression Enquiry Committee submitted their proposals some months earlier, the Government have crippled the scope of the recommendations by restricting concessions to the end of this month. So that the so called concessions operate only for a period of a few days. What is the concession after all? In the case of demand notices, ryots who pay their arrears before the end of this month, four chuckrams demand notice fee need not be realised, and with regard to those who, in the opinion of the authorities are unable to pay, coercive processes are to be suspended till the close of this month. What about tom tom charges, etc. which come in many cases to more than the arrears of revenue? About that the G. O. is silent. Even when this G. O. is in force many lands which have been proclaimed for sale for arrears of tax have actually been sold away and there are several instances in my taluk of valuable lands sold away by revenue authorities even during this month and when we are sitting here. So that my respectful request to the Government is that they should reconsider the proposals of the Revenue Commissioner and extend real concessions and allow all possible remissions if they want to see that the ryots are not made extinct in the near future.

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MR. S. CHATTANATHA KARAYALAR (*Pattanapuram* cum *Shencotta*): Sir, I rise to support the motion of Mr. Damodaran Asan. During this debate a good deal of discussion has been brought in, on the principle of taxation and on the incidence of taxation. I think that a discussion on these two points is irrelevant to the point at issue. The principle of land taxation is not in question; the proposition that land tax is the first charge is not disputed. All that is necessary to consider in this motion is whether the measure of relief given to the poor ryots is adequate or not. This question resolves itself into the question whether the ordinary ryot is able to pay land tax, or not. It would appear that the ordinary ryot is unable to pay the tax from the mere fact that tax has fallen into arrears as late as the 14th July 1931 which is the date of the G. O. The next question to consider would be whether Government have given an adequate measure of relief to the ryots by this G. O. The relief that is sought to be given by the Government seems to be of a very halting nature. Whatever measure of relief the Government have intended to give to the poor ryot has been taken away by the word 'deserving' in the last clause. This gives a very wide discretion to the officers, viz., the Tahsildars who are directly concerned in giving relief to the poor ryots. It is necessary therefore that the Government should come forward with a larger measure of relief, not of a halting nature like the one that they have intended to give under the G. O. I hope the Government will rise equal to the occasion and see their way to give a definite measure of relief to the poor ryots.

MR. K. NARAYANAPERUMAL NADAR (*Agastisvaram*): Sir, I support the motion brought forward by Mr. Asan. Nanjanad is the most heavily taxed portion of land in the whole State, nay, in the whole of India, so that if coercive steps are continued to be taken, I do say that grave results might follow. I do not mean to give an ultimatum to the Government but I urge upon the attention of the Government this fact that the people are discontented. They are paying a tax of Rs. 27½ or probably Rs. 28 for one acre of wet land. The last straw breaks the camel's back and therefore it is up to the Government to see that these people are not burdened with more taxation. For that I can suggest only two methods for the Government. One is that the present system of taxation ought to be revised in the near future. Of course, Government might say that they will do it in 1130. That will not do and we cannot wait for even two or three years more. The other alternative that I want to suggest is remission of taxation. I say that even 50 per cent. of the tax should be remitted. If one of these two courses is not adopted, as I said, grave results might follow and that too in the near future. So that it is up to the Government to see that coercive steps are not being taken. With these few words, I support the motion.

MR. K. P. ABRAHAM (*Muvattupuzha* cum *Todupuzha*): In supporting the motion, I have to make a few observations. The G. O. of 14th July 1931 referred to by my friends who spoke before me says that two concessions are allowed to the tax-payers till the end of this Malabar year. Practically it gives no

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[Mr. K. P. Abraham.]

concession at all. If the arguments adverted to in the G. O. and the decisions numbered therein are read together it would only go to show that no remission should be made. It has been stated here in this House that the orders go to the subordinate officers of the Land Revenue Department. When they read through the arguments of their superiors, they will as far as possible try to oblige the spirit in which the order is promulgated. In the concession made as read from the second decision, it will be seen that remission shall be made in "deserving cases." That is a discretion given to the Division Peishkars as I read the G. O. I heard one of my friends interpreting that to mean that that is a discretion given to the Tahsildars. But the wording in the G. O. is "the Dewan Peishkars will be instructed to give extension of time for the payment of tax until the end of the year in deserving cases." I think these words are liable to be understood as giving the discretion to the Dewan Peishkars. Probably that is the reason why in many taluks even these coercive steps are not discontinued. I know that in my own constituency of Muvattupuzha nearly 31,000 demand notices have been issued till the 7th of this month. That is to say coercive measures are resorted to even say in Kothamangalam after the date of this Government order. That also puts people to many further difficulties. A man when he is compelled to pay tax of Re. 1 by the subordinate revenue authorities has to run up to Kottayam to apply to the Dewan Peishkar for an extension of time at the risk of four times the amount he has to pay to Government. Such is the nature of the relief now given to the ryots. I may say that really no substantial relief is given. Again if from the beginning of the next year that is from the first of Chingam 1107 Government propose to resort to coercive steps, the concession now proposed is of no good to the people at all. It is also patent from the G. O. that from the first of Chingam of next year, Government would realise from the people the expenses on account of the coercive steps taken already. One of the reasons given by the Land Revenue Commissioner in not remitting the taxes is that the people are well able to pay. But the ability of the people if not viewed sympathetically will certainly be misunderstood. The only difficulty now is that the Government members do not feel any sympathy towards the people and they always think that as they get money monthly without any postponement, the people also do not find any difficulty in making the money to pay tax at the proper time. The point of view where the people and the Government officials differ is in the means of getting the money. It is said that because the rates of tax were fixed at a time when the price of paddy was low, even now the people are able to pay tax which is the first charge on the land. The fallacy underlying that argument is the bare supposition that the people have always the same standard of life and facilities and that they are able to give all dues to Government without any consideration for the changes in their standards of life or their means of getting money. It simply would in any way amount to the mathematician's calculation

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ആകെനീക്ക് അരയോളം in total disregard of the actul consequences. It would appear that that argument is adverted to just to avoid remitting tax or in not giving any relief to the people. If the Government for a moment thought they should give a measure of relief to the people they could at least have said that the time is extended till the next instalment. Against that suggestion one difficulty is raised that by that time they will have to pay double the demand and so the difficulty of payment will be twice what it is at present. There is another aspect of the question. If the present instalments were divided into two parts and one part of it was made liable to be paid with the next instalment, the other part remaining payable along with the next 2nd instalment, it would I think be alright and the ryot would not find much difficulty in paying the tax as conditions are expected to improve in course of time. If some such concession were made, the people would be able to make money and would be able to pay them as their means permit them. My submission is that the Government will be pleased to reconsider the proposals in the G. O. and give some measure of relief to the people at this time of acute economic depression.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*) : Sir, the Land Revenue Commissioner asked me a question with regard to the general policy of land taxation. I would refer him to the Travancore State Manual, page 596.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): I did not request him to state the policy but the principle of the tax.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*) ; This is what is said in the Travancore State Manual ;

> "In valuing and assessing land—whether rice lands or gardens—on the most approved principles, modified where necessary, to suit local peculiarities, moderation will be our cardinal and guiding principle of action, for His Highness' Government is convinced that a fixed and moderate assessment on land lies at the foundation of all progress in an agricultural country like India. The Government have no wish to take from the landholders anything more than is absolutely necessary to meet the wants of good administration, for His Highness' Government is equally convinced that all margin of profits after meeting the expenses of cultivation, the Government demand and the necessaries of life will fructify a hundredfold more in the pockets of the people than in the hands of the Government."

Sir, it is because the Government have not stuck to this policy that there is so much famine in the country. More than 2 crores of rupees have been realised from the people and are invested in the Government of India Promissory notes. That has led to the great difficulty and the acute depression prevailing in the country. Why should not the Government at this time take back a portion of that money and spend it for the benefit of the country and for giving remission of taxation to the people of the State. After all is remission foreign to this country ?

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[Mr. A. S. Damodaran Asan.]

My friend Mr. S. Krishna Pillai and others said that remission has been allowed in other countries. For the information of this House, I will just draw the attention of the Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner to another page in the State Manual. At page 511 of the State Manual it is stated that,—

"While Travancore affairs were getting on thus satisfactorily, certain unforeseen calamities befell the country. In 1028 M. E. the whole country suffered by the total failure of crops caused by the floods in the northern Taluqs and drought in the southern. The ryots were so completely ruined that they had not the wherewithal to begin cultivation for the next year. The Sirkar was consequently put to the necessity of remitting the tax on lands which had entirely and of suspending its collection on those which partially suffered. As paddy and provisions were sold at famine rates, the Government had to purchase large quantities of paddy and rice from foreign markets to relieve the existing pressure. This naturally affected the State finances rather seriously. Just about this time the British Government abolished their monopoly on tobacco, in consequence of which large quantities of the article were imported to British Cochin and thence smuggled under cover of night into Travancore in exchange for pepper and other monopoly articles similarly conveyed hence to that place. Thus a double system of contraband trade was in operation and a twofold loss resulted to the Travancore Government."

If that was done in those days when the Government were in financial difficulties and there was no representative chamber like the one that we have, why should not the Government do the same to relieve the people of their sufferings and why should not the Government at the request of the representatives of the people of this country take back a portion of the money that they have invested in the Government of India Promissory notes and utilise it for the benefit of the people ?

PRESIDENT: The passage that you read refers to circumstances different from the present.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): The heading under which this passage is given is "Famine Strain." The conditions existing now are also due to famine strain.

PRESIDENT: But that was due to certain other circumstances such as failure of crops.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): Anyhow, then also the people were in difficulties. Then it was due to the failure of crops; now it is due to the fall in the prices of the agricultural produce. Whatever that be, Sir, the people are at the present moment in a difficulty to pay tax and we want the Government to view the matter sympathetically and take the necessary action. All that I wish to state in regard to the G. O. that has been issued by the Government is that it says that in deserving cases the period may be extended till the close of Karkatakam. Is it the Proverthicar who is to decide whether a case is deserving or not, or is it the Tahsildar or the Dewan

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Peishkar who is to decide it? Do you expect a poor ryot who has to pay a few chuckrams to run up to the Division Cutcherry and put in a petition and get the sanction that coercive steps should not be taken against him? Are we not vesting this discretion in the subordinate officers of the Land Revenue Department? I say if that be so, the discretion will be misused.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): It has been ordered that the discretion to decide deserving cases should vest with the Tahsildar.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): When the Government decided to forward the recommendation of the Economic Depression Enquiry Committee to the Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner, did not they also take into consideration the fact that this recommendation will be forwarded to the Peishkar by the Land Revenue Commissioner, by the Peishkar to the Tahsildar, the Tahsildar to the Proverthicar and ultimately the Proverthy Accountant will collect the statistics which will result in an order which will make the whole recommendation of the Economic Depression Enquiry Committee ineffective. That is how recommendations are called for from the subordinates. From what the Chief Secretary asked Mr. Thanu Pillai, I was led to think that it was imperative on the part of the Government to ask the Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner about it. The Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner is bound only to look at the revenue of his department. It is the Government that has to look at these things from all aspects of the question and come to a conclusion. When the Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner is asked to make a proposal he will only make a proposal which will not in any way tamper with the progress or revenue of his department.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): He has to report to Government about the local conditions.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): It was news to me to hear that when the Economic Depression Enquiry Committee made that proposal regarding the remission of taxation, they did so without considering their responsibilities in the matter without being thoroughly convinced of the necessity of the recommendation and without touring round the country and without any responsibility. And so Government forwarded the recommendation to the Land Revenue Commissioner. What I say is that the suggestion of the Chief Secretary is an insult to the Economic Depression Enquiry Committee.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): I never had any idea of insulting anybody.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): Anyhow, that is what one would gather from the statement of the Chief Secretary. The committee had an official majority and decided that the recommendation must be sent up to the Government,

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PRESIDENT: All that the Chief Secretary said was that the recommendation was made before the enquiry was started.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): What I say is that there was a responsible committee and after deliberation they decided to make a recommendation to the Government probably before touring round the country. Whether before touring round the country or after that they have made that recommendation.

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Neduvangad*): May I inform Mr. Damodaran Asan that the majority of the Committee were fully aware of the acute economic depression prevailing in the country?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): That is what I say. When they have made that recommendation, I say that the Government were not justified in drawing the inference that it was made on insufficient data. I hope that the Government will consider this matter seriously and extend the period of time now allotted for payment of tax and remove all ambiguities and restrictions contained in the G. O. and allow a substantial remission in tax.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): I have nothing more to add to what I said before.

PRESIDENT: Do you press your motion, Mr. Damodaran Asan?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): I press the motion.

PRESIDENT: The motion before the house is to reduce the allotment of Rs. 17,448 for Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner by Re.1.

The motion was put to the vote and carried.

MR. N. K. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): I demand a poll.

A poll was taken with the following result:

AYES—29.

1. Mr. K. P. Abraham
2. Mrs. Anna Chandi
3. Mr. K. C. Chandi
4. „ S. Chattanatha Karayalar
5. „ A. S. Damodaran Asan
6. „ K. Gopalakrishna Pillai
7. „ M. Govindan
8. „ Joseph Kunju
9. „ K. C. Karunakaran
10. „ K. I. Kocheeppan Mappilla
11. „ K. P. Kochukora Tarakan
12. „ K. Krishnan Nayar
13. „ E. V. Krishna Pillai
14. „ N. K. Krishna Pillai
15. „ S. Krishna Pillai
16. „ Tariatu Kunjitomman
17. Mr. K. Kunjukrishna Pillai
18. „ K. Madhavan Pillai
19. „ K. P. Madhavan Pillai (*Chirayinkil*)
20. „ K. P. Madhavan Pillai (*Shertallai*)
21. „ M. P. Madhavan Pillai
22. „ M. Mahomed Mustapha
23. „ P. S. Mahomed
24. „ A. Narayana Pillai
25. „ K. Narayanaperumal Nadar
26. „ Rama Varma Raja
27. „ R. S. Subrahmanya Pillai
28. „ N. A. Sundaram Pillai
29. „ A. Thanu Pillai

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NOES—16.

1. Mr. N. John Joseph
2. ,, L. A. Bishop
3. ,, I. C. Chacko
4. ,, R. Dhanukoti Pillai
5. ,, K. George
6. ,, P. Gomatinayakam Pillai
7. ,, P. N. Krishna Pillai
8. ,, R. Krishna Pillai
9. Rao Sahib Dr. N. Kunjan Pillai
10. Mr. E. G. McAlpine
11. ,, C. O. Madhavan
12. ,, R. Nilakanta Pillai
13. ,, Kayalam Paramesvaran Pillai
14. Dr. K. Raman Tampi
15. Mr. R. Vaidyalingom Pillai
16. ,, J. S. Westerdale

NEUTRAL

Nil.

The motion was declared carried, 29 voting *for* the motion and 16 *against*.

Motion 196.

MR. K. P. MADHAVAN PILLAI: In view of the former cut motion I do not move the motion standing in my name namely,

To reduce the allotment of Rs. 17,448 for Land Revenue and Income-Tax Commissioner by Re. 1.

The Motion was not made.

Motions 197 to 207.

The following motions were not moved:

MR. K. I. KOCHEEPPAN MAPPILLA:

197. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 17,448 for Land Revenue and Income-Tax Commissioner by Re. 1.

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI:

198. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 17,448 for Land Revenue and Income-Tax Commissioner by Re. 1.

MR. A. NARAYANA PILLAI:

199. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 17,448 for Land Revenue and Income-Tax Commissioner by Re. 1.

MR. N. K. KRISHNA PILLAI:

200. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 17,448 for Land Revenue and Income-Tax Commissioner by Rs. 10.

MR. P. S. MAHOMED:

201. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 17,448 for Land Revenue and Income-Tax Commissioner by Rs. 10.

MR. R. S. SUBRAHMANYA PILLAI:

202. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 17,448 for Land Revenue and Income-Tax Commissioner by Rs. 10.

MR. S. KRISHNA PILLAI:

203. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 17,448 for Land Revenue and Income-Tax Commissioner by Rs. 150.

MR. S. CHATTANATHA KARAYALAR:

204. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 86,654 for establishment by Rs. 3,385.

MR. N. K. KRISHNA PILLAI:

205. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 86,654 for establishment by Re. 1.

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MR. JOSEPH KUNJU :

206. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 83,147 for Division Cutcherries by Re 1.

MR. K. I. KOCHEEPPAN MAPPILLA :

207. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 83,147 for Division Cutcherries by Re. 1.

PRESIDENT : The House will now rise and meet again at 11-30 A. M. tomorrow.

The Council adjourned at 5-15 P. M. to meet again at 11-30 A. M. the next day.

P. N. KRISHNA PILLAI,
Secretary to the Legislative Council.

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